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A NOTE ON THE APPROXIMATION OF FUNCTIONS OF SEVERAL VARIABLES B--ETC(U)

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OF FUNCTIONS OF ONE VARIABLE

C. T. Kelley

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A NOTE ON THE APPROXIMATION OF FUNCTIONS OF SEVERAL VARIABLES

BY SUMS OF FUNCTIONS OF ONE VARIABLE

C. T. Kelley

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ABSTRACT

For a class of functions of several variables, which contains the continuous functions, we show that there exists a sum of functions of one variable that minimizes the distance from the given function to the space of such sums. For functions of two variables we show that such a minimizing sum may be constructed by an iterative scheme.

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## SIGNIFICANCE AND EXPLANATION

Often it is desirable to approximate a given function as closely as possible by a member of a class of functions that are, in some sense, simpler than the original function.

In this paper we consider the approximation of a function of several variables by sums of functions of one variable relative to the supremum norm. It is not obvious that a best such approximation exists. We prove that such an approximation does, in fact, exist if the domain of the function to be approximated is a rectangle in a generalized sense, and if the function is in a certain class which includes the continuous functions. Also, if we consider functions of two variables, we show that a best such approximation may be found by an iterative method.

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The responsibility for the wording and views expressed in this descriptive summary lies with MRC, and not with the author of this report.

# A NOTE ON THE APPROXIMATION OF FUNCTIONS OF SEVERAL VARIABLES

## BY SUMS OF FUNCTIONS OF ONE VARIABLE

C. T. Kelley

### I. Introduction

Let  $\{\Omega_i\}_{i=1}^m$  be compact subsets of the reals. Let  $\Omega = \Omega_1 \times \Omega_2 \times \cdots \times \Omega_m$ . Let  $L_\infty(\Omega)$  be the Banach space of essentially bounded real-valued functions on  $\Omega$  with the supremum norm. Let  $S(\Omega)$  denote the closed subspace of  $L_\infty(\Omega)$  consisting of sums of the form  $\sum_{i=1}^m f_i$ , with  $f_i \in L_\infty(\Omega_i)$ .

Let  $K(\Omega)$  be the closure of all finite sums of the form  $\sum_{k=1}^M \alpha_k \sum_{j=1}^m \varphi_{kj}$ , where  $\varphi_{kj} \in L_\infty(\Omega_j)$  for  $1 \leq j \leq m$ .  $K(\Omega)$  is a closed subalgebra of  $L_\infty(\Omega)$ ;  $K(\Omega)$  contains the continuous functions on  $\Omega$ ;  $S(\Omega) \subset K(\Omega)$ . In fact,  $K(\Omega)$  is the smallest subalgebra of  $L_\infty(\Omega)$  containing  $S(\Omega)$ . For  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$  we define a functional  $\mu(k)$  by

$$(1.1) \quad \mu(k) = \inf_{f \in S(\Omega)} \|k - f\|.$$

In [1], Diliberto and Straus considered the problem of finding a sequence  $\{f_n\} \subset S(\Omega)$  so that  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|k - f_n\| = \mu(k)$ . They were able to do this and for continuous  $k$ , their sequence possessed a convergent subsequence. Hence, for continuous  $k$ , the infimum in (1.1) is attained. The purpose of this note is to show that the infimum in (1.1) is attained for all  $k \in K(\Omega)$ , and that for  $m = 2$ , the iteration scheme of Diliberto and Straus converges for all  $k \in K(\Omega)$ . These results partially answer questions raised in [1].

II.

For  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$  and  $1 \leq j \leq m$  define  $H_j(k) \in L_\infty(\Omega_j)$  by,

$$(2.1) \quad H_j(k)(x_j) = \frac{1}{2} \left( \operatorname{ess\,sup}_{\substack{x_i \in \Omega_i \\ i \neq j}} k(x) + \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\substack{x_i \in \Omega_i \\ i \neq j}} k(x) \right), \quad \text{a.e. } x_j.$$

The sequence  $\{f_n\}$  of Diliberto and Straus is defined as follows. Let  $\{k_n\}$  be given by

$$(2.1) \quad \begin{aligned} k_0 &= k, \\ k_1 &= k - H_1(k), \\ k_2 &= k - H_1(k) - H_2(k - H_1(k)), \\ &\vdots \\ k_{mp+r} &= k_{mp+r-1} - H_r(k_{mp+r-1}) \quad \text{for } 1 \leq r \leq m. \end{aligned}$$

We define  $f_n$  by:

$$(2.2) \quad f_n = k - k_n.$$

The following theorem is due to Diliberto and Straus.

Theorem (2.1). For  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$ , let  $k_n$  be given by (2.1). Then

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|k_n\| = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|k - f_n\| = \mu(k).$$

Moreover, for  $n \geq 1$ ,  $\|k_n\| \leq \|k_{n-1}\|$ , and hence

$$\|f_n\| \leq 2\|k\|.$$

We list some obvious properties of the functions  $H_i(k)$  in the following lemma.

Lemma (2.1). Let  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$ , let  $\varphi_i \in L_\infty(\Omega_i)$ , and let  $\{E_r^i\}_{r=1}^R$  be finitely many disjoint measurable sets in  $\Omega_i$  such that  $\Omega_i = \bigcup_{r=1}^R E_r^i$ . Let  $\chi_{E_r^i}$  denote the characteristic function of  $E_r^i$ . Let  $\{\alpha_{rs}\}_{s,r=1}^R$  be real, and let  $\{p_s\}_{s=0}^R \subset L_\infty(\Omega)$  be independent of  $x_i$ . Then,



- (a)  $H_i(k + \varphi_i) = H_i(k) + \varphi_i$ ,
- (b)  $\|k - H_i(k)\| \leq \|k\|$ ,
- (c)  $H_i(\varphi_i, k) = \varphi_i H_i(k)$ ,
- (d)  $H_i\left(\sum_{r=1}^R \sum_{s=1}^R \alpha_{rs} X_{E_r}^i P_s - P_0\right) = \sum_{r=1}^R X_{E_r}^i H_i\left(\sum_{s=1}^R \alpha_{rs} P_s - P_0\right)$ .

For  $f \in S(\Omega)$ , we may write  $f = \sum_{i=1}^m \varphi_i$ , with  $\varphi_i \in L_\infty(\Omega_i)$ . This representation of  $f$  is unique in the sense that if  $f = \sum_{i=1}^m \varphi_i = \sum_{i=1}^m \psi_i$ , then there are constants  $\delta_i$ , so that  $\sum_{i=1}^m \delta_i = 0$ , and  $\psi_i + \delta_i = \varphi_i$ . Now let  $f \in S(\Omega)$  and let  $f = \sum_{i=1}^m \varphi_i$ ;  $\varphi_i \in L_\infty(\Omega_i)$ . For  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$  define  $Q_k(f) = \sum_{i=1}^m \psi_i$ , where  $\psi_i \in L_\infty(\Omega_i)$  is given by

$$(2.3) \quad \psi_i = H_i\left(k - \sum_{j=1}^{i-1} \psi_j - \sum_{j=i+1}^m \varphi_j\right).$$

Note that each individual  $\psi_i$  depends on the representation  $f = \sum_{i=1}^m \varphi_i$ . However,  $Q_k(f)$  does not depend on the representation of  $f$ . Indeed if  $f = \sum_{i=1}^m \varphi_i + \delta_i$ , where the  $\delta_i$ 's are constants such that  $\sum \delta_i = 0$ , let  $\hat{\psi}_i$  be defined by (2.3) with  $\varphi_i$  replaced by  $\varphi_i + \delta_i$ . We have  $\hat{\psi}_1 = H_1\left(k - \sum_{i=2}^m (\varphi_i + \delta_i)\right) = H_1\left(k - \sum_{i=2}^m \varphi_i\right) = \sum_{i=2}^m \delta_i = \psi_1 + \delta_1$ . Hence  $\hat{\psi}_2 = \psi_2 - \delta_1 - \sum_{i=3}^m \delta_i = \psi_2 + \delta_2$ . Continuing in this way we obtain  $\hat{\psi}_i = \psi_i + \delta_i$ , for all  $i$ , and hence  $\sum_{i=1}^m \hat{\psi}_i = \sum_{i=1}^m \psi_i$ . Note that  $Q$  is continuous as a map on  $S(\Omega)$ .

For  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$  let  $f_n$  be given by (2.2), then for  $p \geq 1$

$$(2.4) \quad f_{np} = Q_k^p(0).$$

Also by Theorem (2.1) for any  $k \in L_\infty(\Omega)$  and  $f \in S(\Omega)$  we have  $\|k - Q_k(f)\| \leq \|k - f\|$ . Hence for each  $k$ ,  $Q_k$  maps bounded sets in  $S(\Omega)$  to bounded sets in  $S(\Omega)$ .

Theorem (2.2). Let  $k \in K(\Omega)$ .  $Q_k$  is a compact map on  $S(\Omega)$ . Hence  $\{Q_k^p(0)\}_{p=1}^\infty$  has a convergent subsequence and the infimum in (1.1) is attained.

Proof. We give the proof for  $m = 2$ . The proof for arbitrary  $m$  is similar.

Note first that for  $j = 1, 2$  and  $k_1, k_2 \in L_\infty(\Omega)$ , we have

$$(2.5) \quad \max_{x_j} |H_j(k_1)(x_j) - H_j(k_2)(x_j)| \leq \|k_1 - k_2\|.$$

If  $f(x_1, x_2) = \varphi_1(x_1) + \varphi_2(x_2)$ , then

$$(2.6) \quad Q_k(f) = H_1(k - \varphi_2) + H_2(k - H_1(k - \varphi_2)).$$

Hence, for any  $f \in S(\Omega)$ ,  $k_1, k_2 \in L_\infty(\Omega)$ ,

$$(2.7) \quad \|Q_{k_1}(f) - Q_{k_2}(f)\| \leq 3\|k_1 - k_2\|.$$

Let  $\varepsilon > 0$ . As  $k \in K(\Omega)$ , we may find finitely many disjoint measurable sets  $\{E_r^i\}_{r=1}^R$  in  $\Omega_i$  such that  $\bigcup_{r=1}^R E_r^i = \Omega_i$ , and real numbers  $\{\alpha_{rs}\}_{r,s=1}^R$ , so that

$$(2.8) \quad \|k - \sum_{r,s=1}^R \alpha_{rs} \chi_{E_r^1} \chi_{E_s^2}\| < \varepsilon/3.$$

Now let  $\hat{k} = \sum_{r,s=1}^R \alpha_{rs} \chi_{E_r^1} \chi_{E_s^2}$ . For  $f = \varphi_1 + \varphi_2 \in S(\Omega)$ , we have, by Lemma (2.1), that

$$Q_{\hat{k}}(f) = \sum_{r=1}^R \chi_{E_r^1} H_1 \left( \sum_{s=1}^R \alpha_{rs} \chi_{E_s^2} - \varphi_2 \right) + \sum_{s=1}^R \chi_{E_s^2} H_2 \left( \sum_{r=1}^R \alpha_{rs} \chi_{E_r^1} - H_1(\hat{k} - \varphi_2) \right).$$

As  $\chi_{E_s^2}$  and  $\varphi_2$  are independent of  $x_1$ ,  $H_1 \left( \sum_{s=1}^R \alpha_{rs} \chi_{E_s^2} - \varphi_2 \right)$  is constant for each  $r$ .

Similarly  $H_2 \left( \sum_{r=1}^R \alpha_{rs} \chi_{E_r^1} - H_1(\hat{k} - \varphi_2) \right)$  is constant. Hence  $Q_{\hat{k}}$  has finite dimensional range.

We apply (2.7) twice to obtain

$$(2.9) \quad \|Q_k(f) - Q_{\hat{k}}(f)\| \leq 3\|k - \hat{k}\| < \varepsilon.$$

Hence  $Q_k$  is the uniform limit of maps on  $S(\Omega)$  which have finite dimensional range. This completes the proof.

We note that Theorem (2.2) is in a sense a converse of a theorem in [2]. Golomb showed, in a general Banach space setting, that if one assumes that the minimum in (1.1) is attained, then Theorem (2.1) holds.



The reader should note that if  $k$  is continuous on  $\Omega$ , so is  $Q^p(0)$  for each  $p \geq 1$ . Hence if  $k$  is continuous the infimum in (1.1) is attained at a continuous  $f \in S(\Omega)$ .

In order to prove the final result we require the following theorem of Diliberto and Straus.

Theorem (2.3). Let  $m = 2$ ,  $k \in K(\Omega)$ . Let  $k_n$  be given by (2.1), and let  $k_*$  be any limit point of the sequence  $\{k_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$ . We have

$$H_1(k)(x_1) = 0, \quad H_2(k)(x_2) = 0 \quad \text{for a.e. } (x_1, x_2).$$

Theorem (2.4). The sequence  $\{k_n\}$ , and hence the sequence  $\{f_n\}$ , converges in  $L_\infty(\Omega)$ .

Proof. Let  $k_*$  be any limit point of the sequence  $\{k_{2n}\}_{n=1}^\infty$ . Write  $k = k_* + \varphi_1 + \varphi_2$  with  $\varphi_i \in L_\infty(\Omega_i)$ . Then for  $n \geq 2$  we have  $k_{2n} = k_* + \varphi_1^{(n)} + \varphi_2^{(n)}$ , and

$$(2.10) \quad \begin{aligned} \varphi_1^{(n)} &= -H_1(k + \varphi_2^{(n-1)}), \\ \varphi_2^{(n)} &= -H_2(k + \varphi_1^{(n)}). \end{aligned}$$

As  $H_1(k) = H_2(k) = 0$  a.e. we have, for  $n \geq 2$

$$(2.11) \quad \begin{aligned} -\text{ess inf}_{x_2 \in \Omega_2} \varphi_2^{(n)}(x_2) &\leq \text{ess sup}_{x_1 \in \Omega_1} \varphi_1^{(n)}(x_1) \leq -\text{ess inf}_{x_2 \in \Omega_2} \varphi_2^{(n-1)}(x_2), \\ \text{ess sup}_{x_1 \in \Omega_1} \varphi_2^{(n)}(x_2) &\leq -\text{ess inf}_{x_1 \in \Omega_1} \varphi_1^{(n)}(x_1) \leq \text{ess sup}_{x_2 \in \Omega_2} \varphi_2^{(n-1)}(x_2). \end{aligned}$$

Now there is, by assumption, a subsequence  $\{k_{2n_j}\}_{j=1}^\infty$  of  $\{k_{2n}\}_{n=1}^\infty$  which converges uniformly to  $k_*$ . This means  $\lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \|\varphi_1^{(n_j)} + \varphi_2^{(n_j)}\| = 0$ . This in turn implies that there is a real number  $c$ , so that

$$(2.12) \quad \lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \varphi_1^{(n_j)} = c = -\lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \varphi_2^{(n_j)}.$$

Now choose  $\epsilon > 0$ . There is  $j_0$  so that  $j \geq j_0$  implies that

$$(2.13) \quad \|\varphi_1^{(n_j)} - c\| < \epsilon/2, \quad \|\varphi_2^{(n_j)} + c\| < \epsilon/2.$$

But (2.11) implies that, for all  $k \geq 0$ , and a.e.  $(x_1, x_2)$ ,

$$(2.14) \quad c - \epsilon/2 \leq \varphi_1^{(n_{j_0}+k)}(x_1) \leq c + \epsilon/2,$$

$$-c - \epsilon/2 \leq \varphi_2^{(n_{j_0}+k)}(x_2) \leq -c + \epsilon/2.$$

Hence for all  $n \geq n_{j_0}$ , we have

$$(2.15) \quad \|\varphi_1^{(n)} + \varphi_2^{(n)}\| \leq \epsilon.$$

Hence  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} k_{2n} = k_*$ . As  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|k_{2n} - k_{2n+1}\| = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|H_1(k_{2n})\| = 0$ ,  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} k_{2n+1} = k_*$ . This completes the proof.

We note that these results generalize directly to the case where each  $\Omega_i$  is a compact Hausdorff space endowed with a positive, regular Borel measure  $\mu_i$ , and  $\Omega$  is given the measure  $\mu_1 \times \mu_2 \times \dots \times \mu_n$ . The functions  $k$ ,  $H_i(k)$ , and  $f$  may be allowed to have values in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  if supremums and infimums are understood to be taken componentwise.

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